Year	Targets (lakh mandays)	Achievements (lakh mandays)
1995-1996	853.09	1069.75
1996-1997	406.90	488.60
1997-1998	312.56	388.81
1998-1999	230.42	280.97
1999-2000	Not Fixed	170.27

Conversion of wasteland into Fertile Land

1227. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment of the wasteland all over the country;

(b) if so, what is the total area in hectares;

(c) how much of the wasteland has been converted into fertile land by the Wasteland Development Board, till date;

(d) how much money has been spent on this;

(e) how much annual income is being derived from the conversion of the wasteland into fertile land; and

(f) what steps are being taken for conversion of the remaining wasteland into fertile land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the "Wastelands Atlas of India, 200", brought out by the Department of Land Resources (DoLR) in collaboration with National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), Hyderabad, using Remote Sensing Technologies, the total extent of wastelands in the country is 63.85 m.ha.

(c) and (d) The Department of Land Resources (the erswhile Department of Wastelands Development) has the mandate to develop wastelands in non-forest areas, aimed at checking land degradation, putting such lands to productive use and increasing bio-mass

availability specially fuel-wood and fodder. So far (up to 31.3.2000), various Projects for the development of 23.81 lakhs ha. of area have been sanctioned under the Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) of this Department. A sum of Rs. 431.87 crores has been released up to 31.7.2000 for implementation of these projects.

(e) The Wastelands Development Projects have long gestation period and yield tangible as well as intangible benefits to Community and Environment at large. They lead to increase in production of bio-mass including food, fuel-wood and fodder, recharge of water table, reduction in sedimentation rate, improvement in soil health and generation of employment at large. It is, herefore, difficult to quantify these benefits in exact monetary terms.

(f) In order to provide more thrust on developmet of wastelands, all the Area Development Programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development have been brought under a single Department namely the Department of Land Resources. Allocation of Plan funds for these Programmes have been enhanced from Rs. 281.00 crores in 1999-2000 to Rs. 824.00 crores during 2000-2001. The State Governments have been requested to formulate the perspective plans for development of wastelands.

Assistance to weavers for accommodation/workshop

†1228. DR. D. MASTHAN:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up any fund for providing economic assistance in order to improve the accommodation facilities for the handloom weavers as also their workshop;

(b) if so, when this fund was launched and the amount accumulated in this fund at present;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have decided to grant rupees 12.45 crores for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the amount granted to each State in this regard?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.